

# Three companies that are making *e3 Plus* work

WHEN THE PDAC LAUNCHED *e3 Plus – A Framework for Responsible Exploration* – in March 2009, the goal of the program was that it serve as a benchmark of principles and guidelines that exploration and mining companies could use in their everyday activities. Although presented as a voluntary tool, it challenged companies to strive for excellence in three distinct areas: social responsibility, environmental stewardship, health and safety.

In an effort to see first-hand how companies have been using *e3 Plus* since its inception, the PDAC visited three projects this past year – two in Canada and one in South America – to gain valuable insight into the benefits of the program, along with areas that need improvement.

The first visit was to Val-d'Or, Quebec, in mid-June to a gold exploration site owned by Cartier Resources. The company's CEO, Philippe Cloutier, had previously expressed a keen interest in responsible exploration and wanted to ensure that his company was complying with local regulations, even going beyond the necessary compliance standards when possible. He had presented the best practices outlined in *e3 Plus* to the company's Board of Directors who were particularly intrigued by the principles related to the environment, as well as health and safety.

To achieve his goal, Cloutier hired a consultant who specializes in sustainable development to create a good practice checklist and to oversee the proper application of certain principles. From there, the company started holding staff meetings to verify the application of certain recommendations that were identified in *e3 Plus*, and during the PDAC's visit they were in the process of putting together a bulletin board to help infuse key principles into the company's operating culture. They have even introduced a grant for College of General and Vocational Education (CEGEP) students who, in an essay, can successfully discuss a topic mentioned in *e3 Plus*, regardless of their specialization.

And what's the payoff to Cartier Resources for implementing *e3 Plus*? "Applying best practices through *e3 Plus* will make us more competitive in the long run," says Cloutier.

The second visit the PDAC team undertook was in September to a base and pre-

cious metals property outside of Smithers, British Columbia, that is operated by Callinex Mines. Although the company strictly abides by the laws that regulate the provincial activities of the mineral exploration industry, they have also created their own internal health and safety regulations that use *e3 Plus* principles because as their CEO Mike Muzlyowski put it: "We leave nothing to chance; we can't take the risk."

Furthermore, Callinex is working hard to reduce its environmental footprint. Reclamation of drill sites and ATV tracks is ongoing, and new methods of transporta-

tion are being used to minimize damage to surface areas. The company has also implemented successful strategies to reduce and manage waste materials in all sectors of its projects.

The last field trip the PDAC undertook was in October to Provincia de Jujuy, in the far north of Argentina, to a lithium exploration site owned by Lithium Americas. The company had received an overwhelming amount of support from the local communities since its arrival and wanted to nurture those existing relationships by offering their assistance in local development projects.

*See e3 Plus, page 8*



*Callinex Mines' Coles Creek camp near Smithers, British Columbia.*



*Exploration work at Cartier Resources' Cadillac Extension.*



*Lithium Americas' exploration site in northern Argentina.*